

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03389

EXDIS

E.O.11652:GDS
TAGS: PGOV, EG, IS
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE UNGA RESOLUTION ON ISRAEL OIL
EXPLOITATION IN GULF OF SUEZ

1. IN COURSE OF EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AUGUST 30 ON ME ISSUES
AT THE 33RD UNGA, EGYPTIAN UN MISSION COUNSELOR HAGGAG
AGAIN RAISED THE ISSUE OF A POSSIBLE EGYPTIAN-SPONSORED
DRAFT RESOLUTION ON ISRAELI OIL EXPLOITATION IN THE GULF
OF SUEZ. RECALLING EL-ARABY'S DISCUSSIONS IN NEW YORK
WITH USUN AND DEPARTMENT OFFICERS DURING THE SSOD, HAGGAG
SAID EGYPT HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO COME FORWARD
WITH SUCH A RESOLUTION, BUT IN HIS PERSONAL OPINION IT
WAS QUITE LIKELY TO DO SO.

2. EGYPT, HE CONTINUED, REMAINS VERY CONCERNED AT
CONTINUING ISRAELI EXPLOITATION OF OIL RESERVES WHICH HE
SAID MOUNT TO ABOUT 20,000 BARRELS A DAY. IN VIEW OF US
COMMITMENTS ACCOMPANYING SINAI II TO ASSIST ISRAEL IN
MAINTAINING ITS OIL RESERVES AND SUPPLY, THERE WAS NO
JUSTIFICATION FOR ISRAELI OIL EXPLOITATION IN THE GULF.
HE RECALLED THAT KAMIL RECENTLY HAD RAISED THE MATTER
WITH THE SECRETARY BUT THAT NO DECISION AS TO HOW TO
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PROCEED HAD EMERGED FROM THAT DISCUSSION. THE MFA
REMAINED COOL TO THE IDEA OF BRINGING THE MATTER TO THE
ICJ FOR THE REASONS WHICH EL-ARABY HAD ALREADY INDICATED
TO US -- PRIMARILY CONCERN THAT OTHER ARABS WOULD ACCUSE
EGYPT OF DEALING WITH ISRAEL ON LIMITED ISSUES OF
PARTICULAR INTEREST TO EGYPT AS WELL AS IMPLIED
RECOGNITION OF POSSIBILITY OF ISRAELI CLAIM TO THESE

RESERVES.

3. HAGGAG THEN NOTED THAT THE SITUATION WAS COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT AN AMERICAN OIL COMPANY, NEPTUNE, WAS ASSISTING THE ISRAELIS. HE INQUIRED AS TO THE POSITION WHICH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WOULD TAKE TOWARDS NEPTUNE IF THERE WERE AN INTERNATIONAL ACTION SUCH AS AN UNGA RESOLUTION CALLING ON ISRAEL TO DESIST FROM FURTHER EXPLOITATION AND ASKING FOREIGN COMPANIES NOT TO ASSIST THE GOI ANY FURTHER IN ITS ACTIVITIES. MISOFF INDICATED THAT TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE THIS QUESTION HAD NOT BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE DEPARTMENT, BUT THAT WE HAD INDICATED POSSIBLE INTEREST IN ICJ APPROACH. AT THE END OF THIS PART OF THE DISCUSSION, HAGGAG SAID EGYPT WOULD REMAIN IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH US BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION ON THIS MATTER AT THE 33RD UNGA.

4. HAGGAG'S COMMENTS INDICATE THAT GOE IS GIVING SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO POSSIBLE TWO-STAGE APPROACH IN WHICH WE FIRST WOULD BE ASKED TO SUPPORT THEIR DRAFT RESOLUTION AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO SEEK NEPTUNE'S COMPLIANCE WITH IT. WE RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT GIVE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO THIS POSSIBILITY AND CONSIDER POSITION WE WOULD TAKE IF EGYPT RAISES THIS MATTER WITH US NEXT MONTH IN NEW YORK.
LEONARD

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